

### REMARKS

In the aforementioned Office communication, claims 21, 41, 47, and 58 were rejected as being fully anticipated by Roy under Section 102, and claim 24 under Section 103 based on Roy in view of Colson '440. Claims 27 and 35-39 were rejected under Section 103 as being unpatentable over Roy in view of Strand et al. It should be noted, however, that while independent claim 35 is noted in the Office Action Summary as having been rejected, and on page 4 in paragraph 9 of the Office Action as having been rejected under Section 103 as being unpatentable over Roy in view of Strand et al., the examiner has made no comment regarding how the subject matter of independent claim 35 is deemed obvious in view of the prior art. In fact, for reasons to be set forth hereafter, it is not felt the subject matter thereof is suggested or disclosed in the prior art.

Before discussing the claims to point out the distinctions therein from the prior art, a summary of the prior art is deemed appropriate. Looking first at the patent to Roy, a louver-type blind is disclosed wherein a plurality of slats are formed by folding a strip of material along adjacent fold lines. In an alternative embodiment shown in Figs. 10 and 11, the slats are formed from separate strips that have been folded, but, in each instance, the slats are generally inverted V-shaped. The panel of inverted V-shaped slats is supported by a lift cord 30 with the lift cord being secured to the top slat so that by moving the lift cord in one direction the panel of folded slats can drop by gravity from the extended position of Fig. 7 to a retracted position of Fig. 8. Of course, movement of the lift cord 30 in the opposite direction lifts or raises the interconnected slats to the extended position of Fig. 7. Accordingly, the slats are supported by lift cords, which can

raise or lower the slats to extend or retract the shade through the interconnection of the lift cords with the top slat.

The patent to Strand was cited as showing a blind wherein a material having a plurality of slats supported by lift cords 4135', as seen in Fig. 51B, has a parallel fabric incorporated therein, but as will be appreciated from the discussion of the claims hereafter, this feature of the original claims, which was found in Claim 27, has been cancelled.

The patent to Colson '440 was cited as showing slats having a shape similar to half a teardrop, but this feature of applicant's claims is only found in a dependent claim which depends from a new independent claim 50, which is believed to be allowable for reasons to be set forth hereafter and accordingly the Colson '440 reference is not deemed to be pertinent to the allowability of any of the claims.

In the present invention, as can be appreciated by reference to Figs. 1-3B, a fabric is formed from a plurality of interconnected vanes where each vane is comprised of a flexible component 45 having first and second longitudinal edges and a rigid or semi-rigid component or slat 43 also having first and second longitudinal edges where the first longitudinal edge of component 43 is secured to the first longitudinal edge of the flexible component 45. The second longitudinal edge of each flexible component 45 is secured to an adjacent vane at the location where the first edges of the first and second components of the vane are connected together. In this arrangement of the vanes, the interconnected flexible components 45 might be referred to as a flexible support structure with the flexible support structure supporting the rigid or semi-rigid components or slats 43 of the vanes. Further, it will be appreciated that the flexible

components of the vanes comprise in combination a sheet of material formed from the interconnected flexible components of the vanes with the sheet of material itself being the support structure and being inherently flexible so as to support the rigid or semi-rigid slat components of the vanes in a desired manner.

Of the original set of claims 1-48, including those added in the Response to the Restriction Requirement, claims 1-34 have either been withdrawn due to a restriction requirement or cancelled from the application. Claims 35 and 37-39 of the original set of claims are drawn to the elected specie shown in Figs. 38B-51B, which will be discussed hereafter. Claims 40-48 have been either withdrawn due to the restriction requirement or cancelled herein, while claims 49-90 are newly submitted claims.

Looking first at new claim 49, it is drawn to a fabric for use in a covering for a building structure as illustrated in Figs. 1-3B of the application with the fabric being defined as comprising in combination a plurality of elongated vanes having an elongated flexible component with first and second longitudinal edges and an elongated semi-rigid or rigid component with first and second longitudinal edges, the first edges of both components being connected and the second edge of each flexible component being connected to an adjacent vane. New claim 50 is dependent from claim 49 and states that the second edge of each flexible component is connected to an adjacent vane at the connection of the first edges of the components of said adjacent vane. Clearly an arrangement as defined in claims 49 and 50 is not shown in the prior art for reasons discussed above. Namely, in the Roy reference, the vanes are identical and made of a material that is clearly not flexible and clearly does not have a flexible component and a semi-rigid or rigid component with the two distinct components being

interconnected as defined in claims 49 and 50. In Colson '440, each cellular component of the fabric is made of the same material and, therefore, does not have a flexible component and a semi-rigid or rigid component as defined in claims 49 and 50. Likewise, Strand et al. does not disclose a fabric having vanes made of a flexible component and a semi-rigid or rigid component and, accordingly, it does not show or suggest the subject matter of claims 49 and 50. These claims are, therefore, felt to be patentably distinct from the prior art.

New claims 51-90 are being submitted with new claim 51 being an independent claim upon which the remaining claims 52-90 are directly or indirectly dependent. While the dependent claims are specific to various embodiments of the present invention, some of which were not elected in the aforementioned restriction requirement, they depend from generic claim 51 which is felt to be readable not only on the elected specie shown in Figs. 1-3B of the application, but also other species so that each of the dependent claims is felt to be allowable for the same reasons as independent claim 51.

Looking specifically at independent claim 51, it is directed to a fabric for use in a covering for a building structure wherein the fabric is movable between an extended position and a collapsed retracted position and wherein the fabric comprises a flexible support structure having an exterior surface and a plurality of parallel elongated vanes supported at spaced locations along the support structure, all of the vanes being attached to the exterior surface of the support structure and being adapted to move in response to movement of the support structure and project from the exterior surface of the support structure when the fabric is moved between the extended and retracted positions. Claim 51 is felt to be distinct from the prior art in that the Roy reference does

not disclose a fabric wherein all of the vanes in the fabric are attached to an exterior surface of a flexible support structure. Rather, in the Roy structure, the flexible support is the lift cord 30 which is only attached to the top slat of the assembly of slats so that it is not connected to each slat of the fabric. Accordingly, all of the slats in Roy are not attached to an exterior surface of the support structure as provided for in claim 51. In other words, the support structure is attached to only one slat or vane of the Roy fabric as opposed to the claimed fabric wherein all of the vanes are attached to the exterior surface of the support structure. In the Colson '440 reference, each cell of the fabric is made of one material with the cells being interconnected to each other and, accordingly, there is no flexible support structure having an exterior surface to which all of a plurality of parallel vanes are connected. In other words, in Colson '440, there is not a support structure of parallel vanes attached thereto, but rather a plurality of interconnected cells with each cell being made of a continuous strip of material.

Strand similarly does not disclose or suggest a fabric as defined in claim 51 in that it does not disclose a flexible support structure having a plurality of parallel vanes attached to an exterior surface thereof.

Accordingly, it is felt that claim 51 is patentably distinct from the prior art and while prior art references other than those specifically mentioned above have been cited in the application, they likewise are not felt to disclose the particular structure now set forth in claim 51.

As mentioned previously, since claim 51 is felt to be patentably distinct from the prior art and all of claims 52-90 are dependent either directly or indirectly on claim 51, they too are felt to be allowable.

As mentioned previously, claims 35-39 are directed to the specie of the present invention shown in FIGS. 51A and 51B of the present application. The examiner did not specifically address his reasons for rejecting claim 35 in the aforementioned Office action. In the embodiment of the invention defined in claim 35, a plurality of adjacent fabrics is claimed as being positioned in adjacent architectural openings in a building structure with each fabric comprising a flexible vertically-extending support structure and a plurality of parallel elongated vanes supported at spaced locations along the support structure. The vanes comprise semi-rigid slats secured to the support structure so as to form an acute angle with the support structure and wherein movement of the vanes is totally dependent on movement of the support structure. Further, each of the fabrics is defined as including a top edge and a bottom edge with one of the top or bottom edges being affixed in an associated architectural opening and the other of the edges being vertically movable with said other of the edges being alignable with said other edge of an adjacent fabric so as to form a continuous non-linear edge of the aggregate plurality of fabrics. As can be appreciated by referring to Figs. 51A and 51B of the present application, each of the plurality of three fabrics illustrated has a top edge being fixed in position and a lower edge that is non-linear so as to form a continuous non-linear edge aligned with an adjacent lower non-linear edge of one of the other plurality of fabrics. In other words, with reference to the left-hand fabric shown in Figs. 51A and 51B, its lower edge is a convex non-linear line while the middle one of the plurality of fabrics is concave and formed from a non-linear line that is continuous from the convex lower edge of the left fabric. Similarly, the right fabric has a lower convex non-linear edge, which is continuous with the non-linear lower edge of the center fabric, which as

mentioned above is concave. As will be appreciated, a combined covering is therefore disclosed and rendered unique by the continuous non-linear edge of the movable edges of the fabrics, which is not shown or suggested in the prior art.

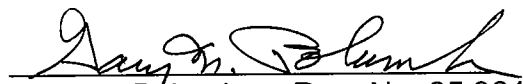
Accordingly, claim 35 as well as claims 37-39, which are dependent therefrom, are felt to be allowable for those reasons.

Having amended the claims while cancelling other claims so that the only claims remaining in the application are patentably distinct from the prior art for the reasons discussed above, and there being no other objections or rejections of the application, it is felt the application is now in condition for allowance and such action is courteously requested.

If any fees are due with respect to this Response, please charge Deposit Account No. 04-1415.

Dated this 28<sup>th</sup> day of May 2009.

Respectfully submitted,



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GMP/dtc